SITUATION REPORT
IOM DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
IOM’s Emergency Operations and Coordination in North Kivu

UPDATE
20 February 2014

INTENTIONS OF RETURN FROM IDPS LIVING IN SPONTANEOUS DISPLACEMENT SITES AROUND GOMA
928 households representing 3773 individuals expressed their intention to return to their place of origin in different “Groupements” of Nyiragongo and Rutshuru Territories DRC—7 February 2014 ©IOM

IOM ACTIVITIES IN THIS ISSUE

• Return of IDPs to former rebel held areas
• Rapid Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) assessments and advocacy for assistance
• Displacement Site restructuring and consolidation
• Announcement of 2013-2016 CCCM North Kivu Strategy
• Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities for displacement and humanitarian impact of Nyamuragira eruption
• Support to the AMANI Festival, a showcase of music, dance and culture for peace in the Great Lakes Region, 15-17 February 2014

BACKGROUND

The current situation in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remains closely linked to the end of the March-23 (M-23) rebellion, announced on 05 November 2013. The subsequent negotiations in Kampala between the Government of DRC and the leaders of the former rebel group involved a flurry of diplomatic activity by the Special Representative of the Secretary General to the Great Lakes Region, H.E. Mary Robinson, and SRSG Martin Kobler. The ‘Kampala Dialogue’ came to a formal end on 12 December 2013 and although a comprehensive solution was not reached, a joint ICGLR-SADC communiqué outlined eleven commonly agreed upon points. The Government of DRC soon thereafter issued its National Plan for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR III) but with the continued presence of former M-23 rebels throughout the region and the continuation of conflict due to other rebel groups in territories such as Masisi, the situation in Eastern DRC remains tense.

The M-23’s withdraw continues to present opportunities for return and reintegration efforts in Rutshuru and Nyiragongo Territories. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the DRC seized upon this opportunity and commenced a new project financed by the Government of the Netherlands to assist in the returns of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), initiate preliminary community transition projects and assist in the re-establishment of key state functions.

Information Management, Site Management and Coordination Units of the Emergency Operations continue activities in displacement sites while working with partners to better identify priorities, cover gaps and ensuring that humanitarian assistance targets to the most vulnerable.

[Map showing displacement tracking matrix]
DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

Monitoring and Mapping Return Intentions

IOM DRC Goma continues to support the efforts of the National Commission for Refugees (CNR), the Government’s entity responsible for the administration of displacement sites, to develop the necessary sensitization messages on voluntary return, collecting return intentions and delivering soon Certificates of Voluntary Return (ADRV) for households in IOM-managed displacement sites of Goma (Buhimba, Lac Vert and Mugunga I) who wish to return to places of origin. 928 declarations of return intentions to Nyiragongo and Rutshuru Territories have been collected since the possibility of return was allowed after M-23’s end.

The return intentions map (found on page 1) shows that of those wishing to return to Nyiragongo Territory, 29.2% wish to return to Kibati, 18.1% to Rusayo and 5.71% to Mudja groupements. For IDPs willing to return to Rutshuru Territory, 18.86% identified Rugari, 10.88% Kisigari and 8.3% Bukombo as the desired groupements.

The information presented above shows where the IDPs who have expressed a desire to return currently reside. The four listed displacement sites constitute a ‘semi-urban’ zone of displacement with 25,503 households/119,943 individual IDPs. It is also necessary to highlight the numerous spontaneous departures that have been noticed for the past few weeks, in particular in the Buhimba displacement site where 60% of the resident IDPs were originally from Nyiaragongo and Rutshuru territories.

This data will allow IOM DRC with its humanitarian and governmental partners to continue monitoring the return of IDPs (primarily from the semi-urban sites around Goma), plan for humanitarian response activities in return areas and protect returning families. Such activities are part of the broader humanitarian and development effort to create a successful transition and reinserion process and segue the activities into early recovery efforts.

SITE MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

Bulengo spontaneous site reorganization

Together with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Site Management Team of IOM DRC’s Emergency Operations continues carrying out site planning activities throughout North Kivu Province with sensitizations of chiefs of blocks made necessary by a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on site management.

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Rapid DTM Assessment of newly identified sites

Through its site management partner, Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale (PU-AMI), IOM organised a rapid DTM assessment in Mushababwe and Rushashi sites from 27 to 29th January 2014.

Separated by a river, both displacement sites are located in Rutshuru Territory with respectively 300 and 355 households. The goal is to quickly collect information about the site (geographic coordinate points, stakeholders in the site and the level of community structure) in order to assess priority needs and better understand the profiles of the residents. In the case of Mushababe and Rushashi, more than 200 households have been identified as IDPs in transit to their place of return. The recent distribution of the results of the assessment and discussions during the spontaneous site working group will now be used to initiate advocacy efforts for future humanitarian response efforts.

Moreover, recent fights between rebel group APCLS and the Congolese Army (FARDC) in Masisi territory have caused displacements in the villages of Muheto, Ndago and Butendere. Most recently, outbreaks occurred in Bukombo (Masisi Centre—Nyiabiondo axis) where several displacement sites are located. Local authorities and partners on the ground reported the creation of new sites as well to IOM who will continue monitoring the situation with partners to track population movements and take action accordingly.

Mushababwe site, Rutshuru - DTM rapid assessment ©PU-AMI
The activity will strengthen the current advocacy with 8ème CEPAC /FIDA, UNICEF, NFI Cluster and other stakeholders for emergency renewal of tarpaulins to the benefit of all IDPs as shown in the image below of the Bulengo displacement site, home to 9,068 households/47,044 individuals. As the Organization of last resort, IOM DRC has also ordered 3,000 tarpaulins to be directly distributed in the Bulengo site to IDPs who, for months, have waited for such relief.

**Buhimba: Return Flows and Site Consolidation**

Following the spontaneous departures of the internally displaced after the M-23 withdraw, IOM’s Site Management and Coordination Team and the Danish Refugee Council have organized verifications of IDPs remaining in the site. Current consolidation efforts are based on the results of this verification process as IOM and partners try to create a revised and accurate framework of assistance based on the needs of the remaining IDPs, estimated at 2,281 households/4,392 individuals.

Renewing the site's infrastructure included relocation of latrines in coordination with Mercy Corps and DRC. In connection to this process, the continuous update of the DTM Database provides available lists for IOM’s partners and supports more effective protection of IDPs. Such activities and information helped UNFPA/PROCIDE's distribute hygienic kits to 1099 women between the age of 15 and 49. The overall consolidation process was used as an opportunity to advocate for further humanitarian interventions within the site, particularly those related to water and sanitation.

**WFP’s Vulnerability Study goes live in Goma-area Sites**

IOM DRC Emergency Operations’ staff are participating in the ongoing joint effort by WFP and the Government of DRC’s local agriculture ministry to better understand, identify and target food vulnerabilities. WFP’s essential operations provide needed food and nutrition within displacement sites throughout North Kivu.

In the semi-urban displacement sites around Goma, aid distributions become quickly consumed by the large number of IDPs without being able to target the most vulnerable. WFP, as the Food Security Cluster’s lead, has therefore initiated a door-to-door effort to better understand food related vulnerabilities within targeted displacement sites. Concerned IOM’s sites involved in the Study are Mugunga I, Bulengo, Buhimba and Lac Vert, all of which are located in the periphery of Goma’s urban zone. After more than 11 days in Goma, IOM staff have just been deployed to Masisi and Rutshuru territories to supervise the survey in the remaining displacement sites.

IOM continues to provide updated lists to WFP and its partners to assist in the implementation of the Vulnerability Study. IOM and WFP are also engaged in discussions on how to better address some of the larger factors related to vulnerability both in displacement sites and in other displacement settings.

**NORTH KIVU CCCM STRATEGY 2013-2016**

IOM and UNHCR DRC are in the final stages of approving the joint Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Strategy 2013-2016 in North Kivu. Coordination mechanisms and the return process were the subject of active discussions in early February 2014 as both Agencies incorporated inputs from partners and worked to finalize the landmark strategic document.

The CCCM Strategy will allow the harmonization of views between the two coordinator’s agencies on humanitarian coordination in displacement sites and host families. It involves a series of five guiding objectives for the CCCM Sector and a series of corresponding actions and timelines in support of the five objectives. This effort is part of a broader process of cooperation and coordination between IOM and UNHCR in DRC. The two Agencies most recently established the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), a forum for common decision making.

On 29 January 2014, IOM and UNCHR also chaired the second joint displacement site working group meeting during which the SOPs on the Return process as well as WFP Vulnerability Study have been tackled together with partners.
At the end of February 2014, concerns existed regarding the possible eruption of the Nyamuragira volcano. The volcano’s proximity to the densely populated city of Goma, home to over 1 million people, represents a major risk. Although concerns were unfounded, this brought additional attention to the need for DRR and preparedness activities.

IOM, as lead agency for Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) in natural disasters situations, decided to become actively involved in the issue in order to provide verified information and useful data to the entire humanitarian community on potential displacement related impacts. IOM is involved in the revision of the Contingency Plan together with the Observatoire Volcanologique de Goma (OVG), Governmental entities and humanitarian partners. Villages of high risk have also been identified and will be incorporated into detailed mapping tools for further DRR interventions.

The Festival was originally to be held in August, 2013 but was cancelled by the organizers due to the outbreak of conflict nearby Goma. Several mortars were fired into urban areas in Goma leading to an escalation of tension in North Kivu and throughout the region.

This time was different and IOM, along with 23,000 others, participated in the event to show its support for peace and stability in Eastern DRC and the region.

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